

**DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION**

DIVISION OF ENVIRONMENTAL ANALYSIS, MS 27

1120 N STREET

P. O. BOX 942874

SACRAMENTO, CA 94274-0001

PHONE (916) 653-7507

FAX (916) 653-7757

TTY (916) 653-4086

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October 4, 2005

Ms. Janis Cooke  
California Regional Water Quality Control Board  
Central Valley Region  
11020 Sun Center Drive #200  
Rancho Cordova, CA 95670  
e-mail: [jcooke@waterboards.ca.gov](mailto:jcooke@waterboards.ca.gov)  
fax: 916-464-4645

RE: Amendments to The Water Quality Control Plan for the Sacramento River and San Joaquin River Basins for the Control of Mercury in Cache Creek, Bear Creek, Sulphur Creek and Harley Gulch

Dear Ms. Cooke:

The California Department of Transportation (Department) reviewed the August 2005 Staff Report regarding proposed Basin Plan Amendments for the Control of Mercury in Cache Creek, Bear Creek, Sulphur Creek and Harley Gulch. We appreciate your addressing all of our previous comments, but would like to reemphasize one of the comments.

Previously, we asked for clarification of the benchmark trigger for mercury-enriched soils. In the Basin Plan Amendment "enriched soil and sediment" is defined as having greater than 0.4 mg/kg, dry weight, in the silt/clay fraction. However, references to this in the staff report continue to be inconsistent as shown in the table below.

Page	Location	Statement
35	3 <sup>rd</sup> para.	"defined as average concentration of 0.4 mg/kg or greater in fraction of sample that passes a 63-micron screen" There is no reference to dry or wet.
43	2 <sup>nd</sup> para.	"As discussed in Section 5.5, areas are considered enriched in mercury if sediment concentrations are greater than 0.4 mg/kg dry weight, in the silt/clay fraction." Refers to silt/clay fraction.
Appendix I 8	4 <sup>th</sup> Row	"(>0.4 mg/kg, fine grain). Includes areas of Bear Creek, Sulphur Creek, and Cache Creek (Harley Gulch to Camp Haswell)" Refers to fine grain.

Suggested Revision: Mercury-enriched soil should be defined as greater than 0.4 mg/kg, dry weight, for soils sampled according to standard protocols.

Ms. Janis Cooke  
October 4, 2005  
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We appreciate this opportunity to comment. If you have any questions please contact Ivan Karnezis at (916) 653-5417.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Gregory A. Rathjff for:".

MICHAEL FLAKE  
Chief  
Office of Storm Water Policy